

## **Why Have a Building Code?**

### **Codes protect public health, safety and welfare**

- Building codes provide protection from tragedy caused by fire, structural collapse and general deterioration in our homes, schools, stores and manufacturing facilities.
- Safe buildings are achieved through proper design and construction practices and a code administration program that ensures compliance. Home and business owners have a substantial investment that is protected through complete code enforcement.

### **Codes keep construction costs down**

- The International Codes, which Warren County has adopted, provide uniformity in the construction industry. This uniformity permits building and materials manufacturers to do business on a larger scale — statewide, regionally, nationally or internationally. Larger scale allows cost savings to be passed on to the consumer.

### **Codes provide consistent minimum standards in construction**

- Codes establish predictable and consistent minimum standards, that are applied to the quality and durability of construction materials, a practical balance between reasonable safety, and cost to protect life and property. The term “minimum requirements” means that construction meets the criteria of being both practical and adequate for protecting the life, safety and welfare of the public.
- Inspection during construction is the only way to independently verify that code compliance has been achieved. An average of 10 inspections are conducted to homes, offices or factories to verify conformity to minimum standards.

### **Codes contribute to the well-being of the community**

- The preservation of life and safety, as well as the maintenance of property values over time, are a direct result of the application and enforcement of model building codes.
- The conservation of energy contributes to intelligent use of resources and provides the consumer with cost savings.

## **How reliable are they?**

- Most aspects of building construction — electrical wiring, heating, sanitary facilities — represent a potential hazard to building occupants and users. Building codes provide safeguards. Although no code can eliminate all risks, reducing risks to an acceptable level helps.

## **Why should codes apply to my own house?**

For several reasons:

- For your personal safety, and that of your family, and the guests invited into your home.
- To ensure the economic well-being of the community by reducing potential spread of fire and disease.
- For the conservation of energy.
- To protect future home purchasers who deserve reasonable assurance that the home they buy will be safe.

**For codes to be effective, an understanding and cooperative relationship must exist between building officials and the groups they serve — homeowners, developers, urban planners and designers, and others in the construction industry. Codes must therefore be responsive to the government's need to protect the public. They must provide due process for all affected and keep pace with rapidly changing technology. These communities can, and do, work together to develop and maintain codes.**